



Based on an analysis of the relationships among *Tawa* and other early dinosaurs, researchers are hypothesizing that dinosaurs originated in what is now South America and soon after diverged into ornithischians (like *Triceratops*), sauropodomorphs (like *Apatosaurus*) and theropods (like *Tyrannosaurus rex*), before dispersing across the Triassic world more than 220 million years ago. The theropods evolved into modern-day birds, although *Tawa* split off from the ancestral branch early on and was not a direct bird ancestor.